

Census of Agriculture

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct the census of agriculture beginning in December 2002. The census provides a detailed picture of U.S. farms and ranches every five years. It is the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the United States.

A farm is defined as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, in 2002.

That's why the census of agriculture is an excellent tool for telling the story of all farmers and ranchers.

You may ask - "How can the census of agriculture benefit me?"

"The number of Black farmers and ranchers continue to decline in the United States. The 1997 Census of Agriculture count totaled 18,451. Therefore, it is imperative that America's Black farmers and ranchers be identified, contacted, and counted in the 2002 Census of Agriculture. It is vital that we identify ourselves and participate in the census of agriculture because it can be used as a tool to identify needs of Black farmers and ranchers and also as an amplifier of our voice across this country. Information from the 2002 Census of Agriculture will be used by USDA to strengthen outreach efforts to ensure that all USDA's programs and services are accessible to all Black farmers and ranchers. These programs and services are critical to our quality of life and the sustainability of our family farms. I urge you to contact your State Statistician in your state (the number is listed on the back of this brochure) to verify that you are on the mailing list to receive a 2002 Census of Agriculture report form."

*Herbert C. Prince, Jr., Farmer / Rancher
Elmore City, Oklahoma*

Importance

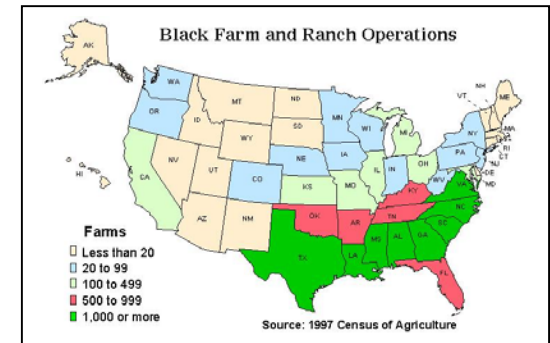
"Statistical data are very important to us. We work directly with and assist farmers in rural communities. We work with small farms, helping them with their economic growth and development. Census data are very important and allow us to reach that goal. It is vital that we have accurate data sets because our life-blood depends on it. It is equally important for farmers to know what competition they face. We encourage all farmers and ranchers to respond to the 2002 Census of Agriculture. When you receive your report form, by all means, respond to it. "

*Bobby R. Phills
Dean and Director, Land Grant Programs
Florida A&M University
Representing 1890 Land Grant Institutions*

"The Federation of Southern Cooperatives encourages all its members and every Black farmer and rancher in America to make every effort to be counted in the 2002 Census of Agriculture. The Federation uses Census of Agriculture information to make key management decisions, especially information that will measure the loss of Black owned and operated farms and ranches and the loss of farm or agricultural land owned by Blacks. The 1997 Census of Agriculture count totaled the number of Black farm operators in the U.S. at 18,451 and farmland owned by Blacks at 1,499,083 acres. The census of agriculture is the only official and reliable source of this information. Census of Agriculture information will be used by USDA to help assure that all its programs and services are accessible to every Black farmer and rancher in the United States. We must have access to USDA's programs and services to survive."

*Ralph Paige, Executive Director
Federation of Southern Cooperatives / Land
Assistance Fund*

Are You Being Counted?



The 1997 Census of Agriculture counted 18,451 black-operated farms and ranches. To get an accurate count for 2002, we must receive a completed report for every farm and ranch in our Nation.

Uses of Census Data

Farm organizations use the data to evaluate and propose policies and programs that help you, the agricultural producers.

Businesses use the data to develop market strategies and to determine locations of facilities that will serve agricultural producers.

State departments of agriculture use census data to plan for operations during drought and emergency outbreaks of diseases or infestation of pests.

Elected representatives from your State and county use the data to develop farm programs to protect and promote United States agriculture.

Public and private analysts make extensive use of census data in making projections and evaluating results of programs and events.

Colleges and universities use census data in research programs to develop new and improved methods to increase agricultural production and profitability.

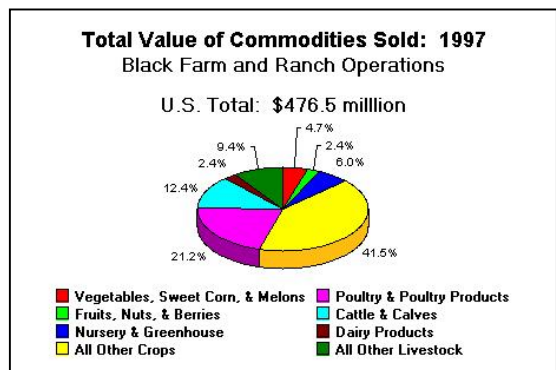
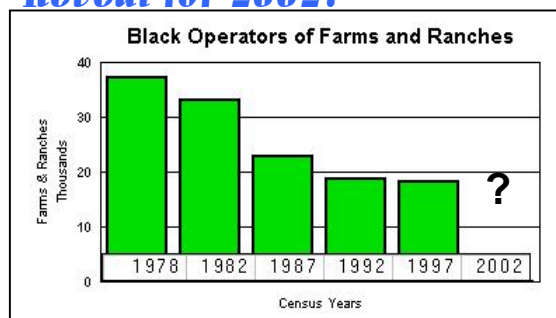
Rural electric companies use census data to forecast future energy needs for you, the agricultural producers, and your communities.

Data Collection

The census of agriculture will collect data on:

- ◆ Operator characteristics ◆ Crops
- ◆ Production expenses ◆ Livestock and poultry
- ◆ Energy expenditures ◆ Machinery and equipment
- ◆ Fertilizers expenses ◆ Corporate structure
- ◆ Chemical expenses ◆ Irrigated land
- ◆ Market value of products ◆ Farm acreage
- ◆ Land use and ownership ◆ Farm programs

What Will The Picture Reveal for 2002?



Tenure of Black Operators: 1997

	Full Owner	Part Owner	Tenant	Total
Number of Farms	11,192	5,368	1,891	18,451
Avg Acres Per Farm	98	199	117	129
Avg Sales Per Farm	\$22,509	\$34,494	\$20,850	\$25,826

Data Confidentiality

Response to the 2002 Census of Agriculture is mandatory by law, Title 7, U.S. Code. This law also carries the responsibility for safeguarding the privacy of operators' responses. **We will not disclose any data about an individual farmer's or rancher's operation.**

To assure that you are on our mailing list to receive a census of agriculture report form, call your State office and provide your name and address:

AL 1-800-832-4181	MS 1-800-535-9609
AR 1-800-327-2970	NC 1-800-437-8451
FL 1-800-344-6277	OK 1-888-525-9226
GA 1-800-253-4419	SC 1-800-424-9406
KY 1-800-928-5277	TN 1-800-626-0987
LA 1-800-256-4485	TX 1-800-626-3142
	VA 1-800-772-0670

For all other States call: **1-888-424-7828**

For help in completing your census report form, or if you are involved in agriculture and did not receive a form by January 2003, call:

1-888-424-7828

www.usda.gov/nass/

You should receive your census of agriculture report form in late December 2002. Report forms are due back February 3, 2003.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



United States
Department of
Agriculture



National Agricultural
Statistics Service

2002
Census of
Agriculture

**BLACK OPERATORS
OF FARMS AND
RANCHES**

BE COUNTED!



You Make It Known –
Agriculture Counts!